

The Portland Metro Yoga Meetup Group. 940 members. Organizer, Steve Davis

<http://www.meetup.com/yogapdx/>

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[Is yoga a religion?](#)

This page is my opinion, only. I am the Organizer of [this group](#). I have written this page to voice my opinion on this subject, as this question seems to come up often. I have studied yoga for over 40 years. I have been teaching yoga for over 30 years. I have traveled to many countries throughout the world, and I have made six trips to India.

Many people have the opinion that yoga is a religion, or it has its roots in religion.

Specifically, they think that it is a Hindu religion, or Buddhist. Some people practice what they call Christian Yoga. There are many other names attached to different yoga 'styles' or 'schools'.

In reality, there is only one yoga. It is a practice and lifestyle of connecting with yourself, with everyone, everything, the world, and in fact, the Universe. It means living in the present. When you are in the present, you are living consciously, not living in the past. You are awake.

This consciousness will tune you into what is required by your body for optimal health, and it will also show you how you can attune to other people, animals, all forms of life, and how the world is in reality. Yoga is grounded in reality, not in imagination. In this way, it is said that yoga lifts the veil of maya (illusion).

Yogis and Yoginis are known for their health, vibrant energy, wisdom, often showing youthful, beautiful physical, spiritual appearance and demeanor. It is a very healthy way of life, and it can help in longevity. It is a natural way of life.

Yoga is a moral and ethical way of life. Every thought, word, and action is important. The interpretation of these principles is written in ancient and modern texts.

Like anything in writing, it is subject to interpretation. The purity of the words is only as good as the understanding of the intent of the words, and how each person interprets the words.

The [Yoga Sutras of Patanjali](#) is one relatively ancient source, and it spells out the eight-limbed path of yoga in Sanskrit, which has been translated into many languages today.

People may have wanted to claim this way of life as their religion for thousands of years.

The history of yoga is unknown, and in fact, the very name yoga may very well be attached to a much more ancient practice and way of life, that predates all known cultures. Language has changed many times in the past, and cultures come and go.

Yoga encompasses the cultures of today throughout the world. Yoga is always current, as it is in the present, not in the past. That is a very important point!

To answer the question: Is yoga a religion?

My answer: No. It is a natural way of life. It is living in the present.

Yoga does not interfere with any religion.

If your religion is enhanced by your ability to understand yourself, others, the world around you, to live a healthy lifestyle, treat others with respect always, then it can only help you, and it will not interfere in any way with your religion.

Namaste,
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